

MEMORANDUM

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET

September 14, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger 
SUBJECT: Hijacking Situation Report

There appears to have been little change in the situation since my memorandum to you yesterday morning. We are still in a period of uncertainty following the destruction of the aircraft, the withdrawal of the Red Cross from a mediating role and the apparent continuing confusion within the ranks of the fedayeen.

The Negotiations

The Bern Group met late last night with the Red Cross representatives who had just returned from Amman. Red Cross Vice President Freymond made the following major points to the group:

-- His departure from Amman was a tactical maneuver intentionally designed as a "shock tactic" to demonstrate to all concerned that the Red Cross would not accept the PFLP approach.

-- The Red Cross would continue an active role in the situation. First, and on an urgent basis, it considered its task was to identify and trace the remaining hostages. The second major task is to clarify the conditions which the PFLP is demanding for the release of the hostages. In doing this, the Red Cross will use all pressure possible on the Jordanian Government as well as work with the PFLP and other fedayeen leaders. It will also work with the Palestinian Red Crescent organization.

-- None of the demands -- even those stated most explicitly -- received from the fedayeen so far can be considered binding or basic for negotiations.

-- The Red Cross will continue to transfer information between both sides and see what steps the govern-

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ments would wish to take next. How it carries out this role, however, would depend upon its appreciation of the situation. For now at least, neither Freymond or Rochat will be returning to Amman and the mission of the Red Cross representative remaining in Amman consists solely of protecting the hostages and visiting them.

Our representative to the Bern Group comments that, although the Red Cross role is diminished, it is probably adequate for the job. Perhaps more importantly, Freymond's expose has probably bought another 48 hours solidarity in the positions of the western powers.

The Israelis are still maintaining their hard line toward negotiating with the fedayeen. Last night Israeli Transportation Minister Peres went so far as to publicly state that if the remaining hostages are not released the use of force, in "the limited and more precise sense of the word," could not be excluded. On Sunday the Israelis rounded up some 450 Arabs within their borders suspected of having connections with the PFLP. According to press reports, the Israeli strategy is to increase the pressure on the PFLP to release the remaining hostages.

The Passengers

We have little further information on the remaining hostages. All of the some 55 hostages (38 now believed to be Americans) are still believed to be in Amman. There are reports that several more hostages will be released today.

The Situation in Jordan

There have been no reports of fighting inside Jordan this morning. Yesterday, however, there reportedly was a major clash between the fedayeen and security forces in the northern part of the country.

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